

November 08, 2022

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-72-22

This All-County Information Notice (ACIN) transmits information about the impact of Social Security Administration (SSA) Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective December 30, 2022, and payable in January 2023, to Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, with the exception of CalFresh households receiving (SSI). The CalFresh and Nutrition Branch will publish a separate letter regarding the impact of the SSI COLA to the CalFresh program.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

CALIFORNIA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

November 08, 2022

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-72-22

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
KIDS (CALWORKS) PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE PROGRAM COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIA REPRESENTATIVES
ALL QUALITY CONTROL SUPERVISORS

SUBJECT: SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION COST OF LIVING
ADJUSTMENT AND IMPACT TO CALWORKS AND CALFRESH –
EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 30, 2022, AND PAYABLE JANUARY 1, 2023

REFERENCE: MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) SECTIONS
[MPP 22-071](#), [MPP 22-072](#), [MPP 44-315.311](#), [MPP 44-316.331](#),
[MPP 63-504.261](#), [MPP 63-504.46](#), AND [MPP 63-509](#); AND [ALL](#)
[COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE \(ACIN\) I-87-20](#)

The purpose of this All-County Information Notice (ACIN) is to inform County Welfare Departments (CWDs) that Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients will receive a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective December 30, 2022, and payable January 1, 2023. Treatment of the COLA in the CalWORKs and CalFresh programs, except for CalFresh households receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), is included in this letter. The CalFresh and Nutrition Branch will publish a separate letter regarding the impact of the SSI COLA to the CalFresh program. The COLA will have an impact on the CalWORKs grant and/or the CalFresh benefit amount depending on household composition.

BACKGROUND

Social Security and SSI recipients will receive an 8.7% percent COLA effective January 1, 2023. When the CalWORKs grant or the CalFresh benefit amount is adjusted due to the Social Security COLA, the requirements for timely and adequate notice shall apply.

NEW APPLICANTS

For new CalWORKs and CalFresh applicants, the actual amount of the Social Security benefit, including the COLA increase, shall be used for eligibility and budgeting purposes beginning with the month of January 2023 and thereafter. For example, applicants who apply in November or December will have the January amount of Social Security budgeted for January as reasonably anticipated income.

TREATMENT OF THE SSA COLA FOR ALL CALWORKS AND CALFRESH SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTING HOUSEHOLDS

For CalWORKs and CalFresh households subject to Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) rules, the CWD will reasonably anticipate the increase in the Social Security amount in accordance with [MPP Section 44-315.311\(SAR\)](#) and [MPP Section 63-509\(a\)\(2\)](#). The amount of the SSA COLA will be considered “known to the county” and shall be acted upon mid-period, per [MPP Section 44-316.331\(r\)](#) and [MPP Section 63-509\(h\)\(3\)](#). Since the SSA COLA is effective December 30, 2022, and payable in January 2023, CWDs must take a county-initiated mid-period action to adjust benefits effective January 1, 2023, for all cases in which Social Security benefits are being used to determine the CalWORKs grant or CalFresh benefit. For cases that have SSA income and a report due in December 2022, the CWD will include the COLA amount in the budget for the upcoming SAR payment period. As stated in the second paragraph of this letter, timely and adequate notice is required when decreasing grants and benefit amounts based on the SSA COLA increase.

TREATMENT OF THE SSA COLA FOR CALWORKS ANNUAL REPORTING/CHILD ONLY CASES

For CalWORKs cases subject to Annual Reporting/Child Only (AR/CO) rules, the amount of the SSA COLA will also be considered “known to the county” and acted upon mid-period, pursuant to [MPP Section 44-316.331\(r\)](#). Since the SSA COLA is effective December 30, 2022, and payable in January 2023, CWDs must take a county-initiated mid-period action to adjust benefits effective January 1, 2023, for all cases in which Social Security benefits are being used to determine CalWORKs grant amounts. The only cases where this action will not be considered “mid-period” are those AR/CO cases with a December 2022 redetermination (RD). For AR/CO cases that have SSA income and a December 2022 RD, the CWD will include the COLA amount in budgeting for the upcoming AR/CO payment period. Timely and adequate notice shall apply if grant amounts are decreased as a result of the SSA COLA.

FOR ALL CASES

If CWDs are unable to change effect a decrease in the CalWORKs grant or CalFresh benefit amount as a result of the increased January 2023 SSA payment, they must take the appropriate action to decrease grant amounts the first of the following month after timely and adequate notice can be provided. January grants will need to be recalculated using the new Social Security payment amount, and if the calculation results in a decrease, the CWD will need to establish an overpayment or over-issuance. For CalFresh cases subject to an over-issuance with the presence of Emergency Allotments, please refer to [ACIN I-87-20](#), released on November 19, 2020. SSI payments are exempt in CalWORKs; however, income should still be updated for excluded assistance unit (AU) members.

PAYMENT VERIFICATION SYSTEM COLA NOTIFICATION

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will not be providing additional notification of the SSA COLA through the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) or Payment Verification System (PVS). However, upon request, a cost-of-living report will be provided to CWDs through a Secure File Transfer. The COLA printouts will be subject to the 45-day timeliness requirements of the (IEVS). Please contact the CDSS Data Stewardship & Integrity Bureau at IEVSReviewUnit@dss.ca.gov to receive your county's reports.

ACCESSING INFORMATION ON SSA COLAS

The CWDs may obtain annual updates on SSA COLAs on the [SSA COLA webpage](#).

CONTACTS

If you have any questions regarding this ACIN, please contact the CalWORKs Early Engagement and Eligibility Bureau at CWEligibilityPolicy@dss.ca.gov or the CalFresh Policy and Employment Bureau at CalFreshPolicy@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH, (Acting)
Branch Chief
CalWORKs and Family Resilience Branch
Family Engagement and Empowerment
Division

ANDREA BRAYBOY, Branch Chief
CalFresh and Nutrition Branch
Family Engagement and Empowerment
Division